

Bengal Preparing for "Peoples Democracy"

An Analyst

EVER since 1967 Bengal has been in the news and therefore most of those who follow national developments are well aware of the major events in the State. That the Congress suffered a smashing defeat (from 127 in 1967 to 55 in 1969), that the United Front of 14 parties have secured a comfortable and dominating position (from 140 in 1967 to 214 in 1969) in a house of 280, that the relations between the partners in the United Front have substantially changed in favour of the CPI(M) — all these are well known. What is now sought to be anticipated realistically is: what is the significance of this new government in terms of democracy and freedom and in terms of peaceful economic development? We have experienced United Front governments in other States and in Bengal before. Will the present government be similar to any of these? Or will it be something different; and if different, how much so and in what direction? These questions are troubling many minds.

First of all it is necessary to take note of the qualitative difference in the political situation between 1967 and 1969.

There was a clear polarisation of opinion between the UF and the Congress and there was hardly any worthwhile triangular contest this time. While in 1967 it was an anti-Congress mood that predominated, it was a pro-UF sentiment that prevailed in 1969. The general public felt that the 1967 government was unfairly and prematurely toppled and that it should be given another chance. After long years of the corrupt Congress regime 'we had a government of ours' but 'they' tricked us out of it. This 'we-they' feeling has emerged, a very serious symptom. Whether this is fully or partly justified is another matter: but it is a political reality.

Another important difference is the fact that the UF has a comfortable majority now and therefore it is much more confident of itself, particularly when the only political opposition, namely, the Congress party, is discredited and is a small ineffective mino-

riety in the Legislative Assembly. This gives to the UF government a sense of security and its leaders are making it a point to drive home to the public, to administrators and to the police that it is going to stay for long. This creates among officers as well as intellectuals and other institutional dignitaries an attitude of 'adjustment' to the new situation and its rationalisation.

The relationship between the United Front partners is undergoing a veritable mutation compared to that of 1967. Then the CPI(M) was considered *one of the three* leading groups — Bangla Congress, CPI(M) and CPI — in the 14-party spectrum. But now CPI(M) is *the* leading member whose leadership and dominance must be accepted in spite of being irksome. The CPI(M) is asserting this position from the very day the results were known and is mincing no words about it. The controversy over the choice of the Chief Minister and the holding of the Home portfolio was pressed with determination mainly to make it clear to all others that Ajoy Mukherjee has to be duly cut to size and that the CPI(M) must have the final voice in spite of the "equality" of partners in the UF. This initial political realignment within the UF was considered very necessary for setting the future pattern.

The future trend in this respect, therefore, is that the UF is to be transformed into a bundle-core cable in which CPI(M) is the thick central wire surrounded by thinner satellite wires. Already some of the other smaller Marxist parties (at least 5) have understood their allotted role, while others are fulminating. The Forward Bloc, with Subhas traditions still sticking in their conscience, feels upset. So also the Bangla Congress. But what can they do? The road to October 2, 1967, is sealed already. Some of their old stalwarts like Hemanta Basu are out of the way. A section of their leaders and workers has been weaned away and these are fighting within their party as agents of the CPI(M). The SSP whose workers were beaten up and even murdered in 1967 is split similarly. The smaller Marxist and semi-Marxist parties are reportedly even financed, so that they continue to function and help to create an image of united alliance of many parties.

The relationship between CPI(M) and CPI remains as peculiar as before. Just at a time when the CPI leaders were resisting the demands of the CPI(M) in ministry-making, its all-India leaders rushed from Delhi to Calcutta (via Moscow of course) and persuaded them to agree to the CPI(M) demands. That meant that while there were local differences, Moscow

wanted to welcome the CPI(M) leaders on the latter's terms. But the relationship between the two communist parties cannot be compared with that between a communist and a non-communist group. The CPI(M) and the CPI are competing for monopoly leadership of the communist movement in India.

Thus the CPI(M) is almost successfully emerging as the dominant centre piece in the UF, step by step removing the semblances of equality between itself and other parties.

While it is true that UF policy cannot still be equated with CPI(M) policy on every issue, in most cases there is hardly any difference. Most of the important portfolios — Home, Education, Labour, Relief & Rehabilitation, Land and Land Revenue, Transport are with it.

The immediate strategy of the UF is to cultivate class popularity by announcing policies and steps providing immediate relief to sections of the public, caring little about their impact on the finances of the State. Some of the government policies and aims were indeed overdue and even Congress governments had declared them. But the Congress leaders did not care to implement them even when decided upon. However, there are other policies which if effected now will not only upset the none-too-comfortable finances of the State; it will bring about a new relation of political and social forces in the State. Mention may be made of one item. The announced land policy is to distribute excess land above 25 acres in the possession of a *family* to those who need it. About 400,000 acres are claimed to be in such a category. Non-agricultural land will also not be exempted. The *thika* tenants in Calcutta and Howrah will be given permanent rights. Meanwhile large-scale forcible occupation of land and fisheries has begun but the police are prohibited from interfering without permission of the ministries concerned. All communist groups are now vying with each other in this movement of forcible occupation. Even new party membership enrolment drive is linked with it.

Thus a much needed and overdue reform is being distorted to suit communist power pattern.

As regards the administration, UF leaders are promoting a kind of realignment. Those in the lower and the middle rungs of the ladder are given full encouragement while those at the top are being snubbed and made to realise that the seniors must adjust themselves. The immediate removal of the Inspector General of Police is a case in point. There are some senior administrators who are not liked by the leaders and, if they are not transferred, an additional post is created and much of the senior's work is taken away from him and allotted to the additional officer. In the matter of choosing this additional officer policies are being followed which create rivalry and division in the officers' ranks to be exploited later. This infiltra-

tion within the civil service has been going on both from below as well as from within the higher echelons. There is a strong belief that party cells operate quite extensively in the administration both at State level and at lower levels and these helped actively in the elections. The BDO and the Sub-divisional officers and the Provincial Cadre are full of UF and communist enthusiasts, and the plight of a non-partisan senior civil servant can be easily imagined.

The police administration has a special significance. In 1967 UF took up an antagonistic attitude towards it. But in 1969 it did not commit that 'mistake'. The Home Ministry having been taken by the CPI(M), it applied the same tactics as in the case of the administration. Those specially favoured are being given lifts curbing those who are not liked. The method of transfer is an old policy. The entire realignment and reorganisation of the police is still being worked out. A very large number of new persons are soon to be recruited and one can be sure that most of them will be nominees of the communists. The lower ranks of Constables and Sub-Inspectors and Inspectors are of course being encouraged. Among the higher ones "readjustment" to the new situation has begun, they having realised that the present regime has come to stay.

The recent spate of communal trouble has given another chance to the Home Minister to find fault with the police and to make drastic changes and transfers. A suspicion of political conspiracy is being stressed and this will give him an excellent pretext to operate.

Although gheraoes are not being encouraged on a large scale, pressures of all kinds are being exerted both on industrial and in the rural areas and the police have been strictly asked not to go to the help of the coerced. If there is a magistrate's order, even then verbal instructions are reported to have been given to the police to go slow. On the other hand, the leaders have publicly declared often that they will be clearly on the side of workers and peasants. In such situations the Ministers are directly approached by a few aggrieved and then the Minister agrees to persuade the workers only when a "compromise" is arrived at.

It is in these ways that the police is being used or 'non-used' in a situation involving a very vague and ambiguous phrase "democratic movement".

In 1967 communists had launched a terrorisation campaign against SSP, Forward Bloc, PSP and other workers. But this time first some Naxalites were beaten up and later came the turn of Congress and INTUC workers. People are afraid to go and report to the police. Such incidents are on the increase and several political murders have taken place but the press is underplaying them and they are being treated as

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Untouchability - The Indian Apartheid

Arvind A. Deshpande

"Make no more heroes of God; only elevate the race!"

—Robert Browning

THE Shankaracharya of Puri has done it again. This time he has raised a controversy over the subject of untouchability, the Indian apartheid. He made certain statements in the course of his address at the Vishwa Hindu Parishad recently held in Patna, which have created excitement and invited adverse comments from all sections of public opinion. Personally, my first reaction is to pay him the greatest of compliments, that is: refuse to take him seriously.

Even so, we must examine his reported statements on this important subject at least for the sake of those who have attached so much significance to his opinions. His Holiness made, according to the press reports, the following logical but amusing statements:

(a) That the Hindu scriptures sanctioned the practice of untouchability and that as the Head of a Pitha upholding and believing in these 'scriptures' he had to approve of it;

(b) That while as a religious Head he would defend the practice of untouchability, as a law-abiding citizen he could not disobey the law passed by the secular parliament;

(c) That just as no one could stop him from serving or nursing a poor Harijan, so also no government could stop him from taking a bath after 'touching' a Harijan.

To make this appear more logical and clever, the Acharya issued a subsequent statement of clarification at Vijayawada saying that he only wanted to convey that it is the birthright of every person to practice discrimination and discrimination could be practised even between members of the same family not to speak of group and castes. One wonders if any public prosecutor will succeed in proving against him the charge of violating the Untouchability (Offences) Act of 1955, in the face of such contradictory and amusing statements.

Those who think that such deep-rooted and age-old prejudices can be removed by passing appropriate laws or by sending Heads of Pithas to jails are only being naive and deluding themselves. The prejudices will be ultimately overcome by the forbearance, tolerance, pride and self-respect of the Harijans or untouchables themselves.

One more point should be made clear here. It would be a mistake to suppose that the Head of a Mutt or a Pitha must also be a saint. One should certainly feel hurt or shocked if a saint made a statement in favour of untouchability. But one should not feel shocked if the Head of a religious order or Pitha made such a statement. In fact a Pithadhipathi or Head

must needs defend all the dogmas or prejudices of his Pitha or else there would be no necessity for the Pitha. Only a saint, if he also happens to be a religious Head, can be expected to endeavour to remove the prejudices, and discard dogmas. The Adi Shankaracharya who was not only a philosopher-saint but one of our greatest intellects is supposed to have admitted that he could not justify the practice of untouchability.

Coming to the subject proper, I think no liberal Indian or Hindu for that matter will deny that the practice of untouchability is not only sinister but inhuman and immoral. We have all been shocked to find in our midst a large section of people who being "untouchables" have suffered discriminations unthinkable in any civilised society. That is why, saint after saint, social reformer after social reformer from Ram Mohan Roy, Jyotiba Phule to Mahatma Gandhi fought for the abolition of untouchability. That is why the Government and our Constitution-makers have passed all laws they could to make the Harijans full citizens and rehabilitate them.

Yet, no sane Indian will also deny that the age-old prejudices still continue. This is because untouchability is only part of the wider phenomenon of caste. As Mr. A. C. Mayer in his book *Caste and Kinship in Central India* rightly points out, it "is only a more severe form of the concept of pollution which runs right through ritual regulations." Caste is still very much central to Indian life. It is, as Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan very often asserts, "the biggest political party in India". To complicate the matters further, the special privileges and "reservations" etc., have created a vested interest in backwardness and have produced a bitter resentment (for economic reasons) among the so-called Caste Hindus. Then we have sub-castes which are worse and more rigid than castes. Even the so-called "untouchables" sometimes keep their own hierarchy. Taya Zinkin once remarked that she nearly started a riot in Bihar when she tried to make a sweeper allow a basket weaver to draw water from his well. So it is an extremely complicated process and cannot be abolished by a fiat or wished away. It is too late in the day for the Shankaracharya now to put the clock back. Nor can our progressive M.P.s remove the prejudices by flamboyant talk or gestures. Such talk only reveals that they are confusing a temporary victory with success. This is like opting for winning a few battles only to lose the war.

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BENGAL PREPARING FOR "PEOPLES DEMOCRACY" — Cont'd from page 2

normal local affairs. In Durgapur the officers in the Hindustan Steel are being daily assaulted at homes and on roads, as they belong to the "enemy class", but the police is taking no notice of it.

The old slogan of "conspiracy" against the UF government is now being increasingly raised and the public is asked to "watch the enemies of the UF". The Home Minister has asked the police to give him reports of activities of "enemies of the UF" and the police has naturally to satisfy him by manufacturing or exaggerating reports. There are many careerist officers who would obviously like to please the boss.

Two major policies remain to be mentioned while dealing with the aims and policies of the UF government. One is the aim of weakening the Centre. The Dharma Vira episode, the Durgapur firing incident followed by that at the Kashipur Gun Shell Factory have been high-lighted by UF leaders mainly in order to weaken the authority and moral and political prestige of the Centre. It is a kind of cold war against the Centre and preparing the mind of the people against it, so that the UF regime can feel free to do anything it likes if the Centre gives in; and if the latter resisted, the slogan of conspiracy and domination would be raised.

The logic of such a policy would take the UF to the other inevitable step — of building up a passionate climate of Bengali paranoic psychology against the Centre. Once these two trends get linked up and fused into one another — there is substantial historical and emotional background for this — the stage will be ready for a more catastrophic development. Seeds of such policy indications can be discerned if we carefully study the ideological discussion among various communist groups.

Although on the surface it appears that there are three communist parties fighting against each other, a closer look would reveal that basically their differences are not fundamental with regard to their essential political aim. We shall not go into intricacies of their differences here but shall only summarise their position.

While the Naxalite takes a clear Chinese position and stands for promoting violent struggle here and now, the CPI(M) is very emphatic that India is a big-bourgeois-landlord State and there can be no compromise with it and it has to be overthrown. But the time for it is not ripe, as the party and its base is not yet strong enough. The CPI(M)'s participation in the electoral process has been on the clear understanding that it "cannot but look upon the process of elections and the institutions of elected legislatures in capitalist societies as nothing but the instruments of class struggle, nothing but fields of battle in which the organized working class mobilizes and organizes all sections of the working people against the bourgeoisie

and its allies." No quarter will be given to any political or tactical line that would create the illusion among the people that the exploiting classes will allow themselves to be "peacefully overthrown" if only the working class and its allies "play the parliamentary game". The CPI(M) makes it quite clear that even substantial relief cannot be granted to the people through the Ministries and that the UF government is to be treated as the instrument of struggle in the hands of the people.

The CPI's position is not very different either. "The CPI certainly does not believe in the exclusive efficacy of legislation or governmental power".

Thus it is more a question of emphasis and timing. The aim of all communists is to establish "*Peoples Democracy*" of the Eastern Europe type and none of them believes that this can be done by the normal parliamentary process.

But the CPI(M) has one major difference with the CPI and that is as to whether to attempt to take India as a whole or to take it in parts. It does not believe India to be a single nation but a "multi-national union of India" and therefore "the ministries in Kerala and West Bengal should take the lead to formulate the problems of Centre-State relations concretely and rally all the forces in defence of democracy, of the rights of all the nationalities and peoples". Perhaps Moscow still believes that India can be had as a whole; CPI(M) thinks it to be more realistic to take it by parts. That again is a matter of tactics.

The CPI(M) has made it perfectly clear in its documents that there can be no question of Centre-State cooperation (which can only mean class co-operation). There can at best be a "truce". This gives a clear clue to the future pattern of developments.

It is in this context that we have to interpret the release of all Naxalite prisoners including those charged with murder and dacoity by the UF government, even expecting that some of those released would rejoin the CPI(M). The CPI(M) is concentrating its maximum efforts in enrolling new members and building up its front organisations on a massive scale.

In effect what is taking place in Bengal before our eyes is the emergence of a State within the State, weakening the legitimate State, neutralising and paralysing its authority, emasculating and terrorising political opposition and building up the communist movement both in depth and extent by taking full advantage of the ministerial position. All this is being done in full day-light and under the full knowledge of the Government of India and the Indian people. If this is not subversion of the State ideologically, politically, psychologically and even in terms of institutions, I do not know what is.

Germany And Europe

A. G. Noorani

BEYOND a doubt, the most important and complex of international problems is that of Germany. It constitutes the core of the Cold War and its dangerous potentialities far exceed those of any other. Her resources and strategic position enable Germany to affect the balance of power in Europe. West Germany alone is today the world's third industrial country and its second trading nation. One can well imagine the power of a reunited Germany.

For a long time after the last war and while its aftermath the Cold War was raging, Germany's politics had assumed a set pattern. The Federal Republic of Germany was a member of NATO and sought German reunification through a policy of strength which, it was hoped, would one day lead to the collapse of the German Democratic Republic, a member of the rival alliance system, the Warsaw Pact.

This policy which bore the impress of the masterful personality of Dr. Adenauer has changed significantly. In a brilliantly-written essay* Prof. Karl Kaiser explains how and why. He poses four questions: "First, what changes have occurred in West Germany's policies on the division of the country, considered in the context of her foreign policy and of international politics after World War II? Second, what domestic and international factors contributed to this evolution? Third, what problems and dilemmas are raised by these developments, both for Germany and the Western powers? Finally, what patterns of interaction between domestic and international politics are characteristic of Germany, and what conclusion relevant to the peace and stability of Europe could be drawn from these observations?"

To an Indian reader certain characteristics of the study as well as its subject stand out. It deals with a matter of the utmost national importance with the utmost candour. It is not an apologia for official policies nor a diatribe against them. It is simply a work of high scholarly merit written in a befittingly calm and composed style. I doubt if Prof. Kaiser will accept the compliment of courage. Simple honesty is not courage, he will retort. I cannot think of any essay of comparable distinction on India's foreign policy. If it were to be as candid and intellectually honest as Prof. Kaiser's essay it would be acclaimed as a courageous work. And rightly so.

About the subject, Bonn has dared to change. It shook off an immobilism that had gripped its policies and it altered the style and the substance of its external policies in significant respects. This change was made possible, rather inevitable, by the debate within the

Republic. Those who sneer at the democratic practice of Bonn will do well to reflect on the debate on foreign policy within the Federal Republic. Prof. Kaiser provides the reader with fair glimpses of that debate.

"The two German states are not regimes that created foreign policies, but foreign policies that created political regimes. Both emerged in a specific international constellation that deeply affected their political systems, constitutions and ideologies, their party systems and internal political divisions" writes the author. The link between their external and internal policies is unusually close.

A stage was reached when Bonn realised that it was the last believer in the Achesonian doctrine of negotiation from "positions of strength". It altered its sights and made changes designed for a more effective policy in the climate of the detente. But the necessity for change made the Great Coalition an imperative which in turn enabled more departures from the past.

The change was reflected most in the first major policy statement by Chancellor Kiesinger before the Bundestag on December 13, 1966 but some of its features were evident also in the policies of Foreign Minister Schroder before the Great Coalition. The latter gave it form and content as it alone could have.

Prof. Kaiser succinctly sums up the changes under six simplified "major tenets". First, in place of the elimination of Communist rule in East Germany, by popular revolt or electoral verdict, West German effort was to be directed to "the preservation of the nation's common heritage and the improvement of political conditions in East Germany". Secondly, the right to be the sole legal representative of the German people was modified by the establishment of diplomatic relations with Rumania. Thirdly, as a corollary, the Hallstein doctrine was modified in regard to relations with the countries of Eastern Europe. Rumania and Yugoslavia were the two countries of the region with whom West Germany was able to forge diplomatic links. Fourthly, instead of ostracizing it, as before, a "live and let live" attitude was developed even to the point of assuring the East German regime that its overthrow was not a West German objective. Fifthly, the Great Coalition has formally denounced the Munich agreement and while it has not changed the former stand on the Oder-Neisse line it has "shown signs of compromise". Lastly, and the core of the change, while formerly Germany reunification was a condition precedent to a relaxation of tensions "it is now held by the new German government that unity can only come as the consequence of a relaxation of tensions" for which West Germany must actively strive.

There are however two serious limitations to the pursuit of the *Ostpolitik*, the Federal Republic's

* *German Foreign Policy in Transition* by Prof. Karl Kaiser, Oxford University Press, 12s 6d.

membership of NATO and its border policy. As its newly elected President Herr Gustav Heinemann remarked, on March 7, membership of NATO could not be the final goal of German policy, for it was just as "impossible to restore the community of our nation within NATO as it would be within the Warsaw pact". He added: "We must be ready in principle to get out of these block formations". The remarks created quite a stir but their logic is hard to contest.

Secondly, the Republic's refusal, under domestic pressure, to accept the Oder-Neisse line makes its *Ostpolitik* suspect in Eastern eyes. Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski has pointed out that "the very linkage of the two (reunification and frontier revision) tended to reinforce the East European state in keeping Germany divided." Prof. Kaiser makes an ingenious and very sensible suggestion — recognition of the Oder-Neisse line as the frontier of a reunited Germany. A conditional recognition which would take effect only after progress on reunification. Domestic opposition and the fear of "a wave of right-wing radicalism" stand in the way of the recognition.

Limited though it is, the new policy has been fairly successful. It has imparted a degree of mobility to Bonn's course in Europe, diminished greatly its differences with its allies and, indeed, shown some results, witness Rumania and Yugoslavia.

But it has its dangers no less. "A new *Ostpolitik* that maintains territorial claims and subtly tries to undermine Soviet influence may appear too threatening to the Russians or to Eastern Europe to be successful, yet too active not to revive fears in the West of a new Rapallo. The worst that could happen would be the increasing isolation of the Federal Republic. This, together with uncertainty about Germany's future domestic stability, would significantly weaken the Western Alliance." It should be added though that the Coalition has never omitted to stress "the absolute necessity for the support of (and German co-operation with) the Western Allies".

There is no doubt whatever but that reunification is a live passion with the Germans and not a spent emotion as some in our country imagine. It would be very shortsighted on the part of the U.S. and its partners in NATO to pursue a detente with Russia in a manner which forecloses all prospect of German reunification. It will only serve to pave the way for a Rapallo of fearful consequences.

It is de Gaulle, however, who has suggested the best strategy for dealing with the problem; "The German problem is indeed the European problem", he remarked at a press conference in February 1965. The author sums up the Gaullist idea in these terms, "The division of Germany can be overcome only by healing the partition of Europe, and Germany can play a decisive role in this process."

West Germany has made a start by its overtures to

East Germany. Where once the latter sought contacts with the former only to be snubbed it is Bonn now which seeks a *modus vivendi* with Pankow and Pankow which rejects the overture by setting impossible terms. And without the consent of East Germany, more correctly, its principal, Russia, German reunification is impossible. "Germany's partition is an essential structural element of the present international system of muted bipolarity, though its relative stability is constantly threatened by the division itself. Some form of German unity is conceivable only as a result of major changes either within the present international system — but then in the form of major disruption and conflict — or of the international system itself — but then with no certainty of long-term stability. West Germany's conclusion has been similar to that of most other Western countries; namely, to live and to work with the paradox which makes acceptance of the *status quo* in Germany and Europe a precondition for its eventual change. The Federal Republic now shares with other Western countries the belief that German unity can only be achieved within the larger process of overcoming the division of Europe."

West Germany's new course does not guarantee the overcoming of the partition of Europe and of Germany but it is a step in that direction.

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If I were a Harijan I would no more ask for special rights or privileges except the right to free education and free competition. These special rights have served their purpose and it is no more necessary to make the Harijan our permanent "second class" citizens. What is needed is the restoration of self respect and pride among Harijans. We do not want a few "heroes" but our aim should be to elevate the whole race. The aim should be not to compel by legislation, a high caste Hindu girl to marry a Harijan boy but to create conditions wherein a high caste girl, of her own volition, prefers a Harijan boy. This is exactly what happened in Dr. Ambedkar's case. A high caste woman asked for his hand. He did not go begging for it. There is no substitute for self respect, pride and dignity. After all why should it be really important for the so-called Harijan to be called a high caste Hindu? I would humbly submit that the Harijans should no more think in terms of favours, reservations of jobs, etc. Like Dr. Ambedkar, they should be proud, self respecting commanding respect and attention on their own merits. I repeat, untouchability in India will not be removed by legislation, or condescension on the part of so-called high caste people but by Harijans themselves, through their patience, ability and hard work. Like the Negroes in U.S.A. they too will have to sing and shout: "We shall overcome".

Russia In 1984

Milovan Djilas

IT may confidently be said the world will not be as George Orwell imagined it in his "1984." That world of Orwell's was divided into three totalitarian empires—Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia. Every movement, every moment in the lives of the citizens of these empires was under the surveillance of the listening devices and television instruments of the Thought Police. Citizens were never certain that they would not be awakened in the morning by the bombs of one or another of the two other great powers—perhaps the very one with which their own Government had been in fraternal alliance the night before. It was a world in which the Ministry of Peace waged war, in which the Ministry of Love maintained order, and in which children who informed on their parents were proclaimed heroes. Still, this is not to say that Orwell was not right.

Orwell's thought is as inexorable and precise as Machiavelli's, while his satire is as razor-sharp and grotesque as Swift's. By depicting a totalitarian Great Britain in the year 1984, he, in fact, revealed the terrible absurdity of totalitarianism itself. The cutting edge of Orwell's satire was directed against Communist totalitarianism. However, it pierced deeper, into the very core of modern society and man's nature. The fact is that modern technology in itself facilitates rather than hinders totalitarian rule unless forces in society are found to prevent this.

The ideological unity of the Communist order, which Stalin maintained by the most cruel and perfidious means, proved to be untenable with the establishment of several Communist states. First, it was little Yugoslavia which, in 1948, rebelled against the new imperium and thus aroused the nationalist aspirations of Communists throughout the world, while in 1963 China emerged as a world Communist great power and caused a schism within the universal dogma. The recent occupation of Czechoslovakia completed the transformation of Soviet Russia from a world ideological power into a world imperialist power.

The consequences of these changes are numerous, but it would appear that the most important are the following:

(1) World Communism no longer exists as a unitary movement, but rather as a collection of national movements which are becoming ever more profoundly separated from one another in ideology.

(2) The relations between the two Communist great powers—the Soviet Union and China—are pregnant with contradictions which are no less—if, indeed, they are not greater—than those which exist between either of them and the Western so-called capitalist

states. The small Communist states and Communist parties are threatened above all by these great powers.

(3) The Marxist-Leninist dogma has itself been overtaken by an incurable crisis.

(4) Crisis and doubt have gripped even the ruling party bureaucracy.

Only by keeping in mind such realities is it possible to picture the future of Communism in the year 1984—a year which is so distant, given our tempo of life. Yet we must note: inasmuch as social reality is the fruit of the creative efforts of man, it is not given to anyone to foresee that reality with certainty. One may speak only of developing trends.

All Communisms are—or, rather, were—identical in their dogmatic, total exclusiveness, but each one of them is adapting—and foundering—in its own, so to speak, national way. This holds true even for Communism in the Soviet Union, though the social stratum which upholds it there is more steadfast and self-confident than in the other East European countries.

It is therefore especially important to recognize that it was Soviet Communism which was the first to become national, under Stalin himself, by developing the idea of the "leading role" of the Soviet Union as the "main force" of world Communism. Soviet Communism is, in fact, the merger of imperialism and totalitarianism, and it has essentially remained this to the present day. So it will also remain in the future, for as the ideology crumbles away, so also will the role and power of the party apparatus as its guardian and propagator. But this does not mean that Soviet-Great Russian imperialism will automatically wane, nor that freer forms will develop by themselves in the Soviet Union.

The crises of the party bureaucracy in the Soviet Union will be quite different from those elsewhere. In the other East European countries, for example, these crises give rise to currents of reform and national resistance which will gain wide support in the future, not only from the people, but from significant segments of the ruling parties. In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the thin layer of the creative intelligentsia (the writers, artists, scientists) is being alienated, while the masses of the people are still passive. There the crises will ripen predominantly at the top, and that by way of individual leaders as the representatives of various strata of the ruling party—that is, of various currents within the ruling party. In all this, one must keep in mind that the ruling party is made up, not only of the party apparatus and the passive mass of members, but also of almost the entire officer corps and significant segments of the technical

intelligentsia. The crumbling of the ideology, which is already being revealed in the incapacity to develop new ideas on old foundations, will find various expressions in each stratum of the ruling party.

In the year 1984, Marxist-Leninist ideology will be dead in the Soviet Union, and the party will not exist, or it will be in ruins. The party apparatus and the secret police will be under the control of the army. The dominant role of the militarists in public life will be unconcealed and frankly accepted. But "revisionism"—that is, new democratic ideas—will spread in all areas. Sects of "pure" Leninists, "humanistic" Marxists and anarcho-Marxists will rise from the ruins of an unrealized faith in an ideal society. Nor will a Communism of the Orthodox religion be lacking.

Most significant will be the Communists of the degraded and subordinated nations, with their open demands for a greater and more independent role for their republics. The subjugated East European states will turn into an intolerable burden for Soviet bureaucratic-militaristic imperialism. A tendency toward military dictatorship will manifest itself there, too, but it will be the opposition currents of democratic Socialists and democratic nationalists that will place their stamp on public life and on the struggle for state independence.

This military-bureaucratic regime will be even weaker than today's. The world need not feel more threatened by it than it is by the rule of the present party apparatus, which is befuddled by the demise of the ideology and startled by the growing role of the army. And the ascendancy of the army will be brought about chiefly by internal, not external, causes. The Soviet Union is no longer capable of bringing forth a Napoleon.

Perhaps, though not necessarily, Europe will become more united, for the United States of America will remain more powerful than the U.S.S.R., while in the east, China will ascend, better organized and more stubborn in its demand that Moscow return the territories which the Russian Czars seized from its empire.

The Soviet militaristic bureaucracy will be forced to be more amenable to the West and to promote economic cooperation with it. Without fresh ideas, without influence over progressive social groups, without a base in property relations, the militaristic bureaucracy can only prolong the agony of the existing political and imperial structure. For a military despotism in the Soviet Union will not be a new order, but the continuation of the collapsed old order. It will be the last pocket of resistance in the crumbling fortress of the political bureaucracy. The predominance of the military bureaucracy will signal the dissolution of ideology and the end of the party as "the leading force in society."

—Condensed from *New York Times Weekly Review*

An Odd Meeting

After much publicity the latest conference of European Communist states in Budapest only lasted two hours. And, wonder of wonders, Mr. Dubcek of Czechoslovakia was in the chair. It was all very odd.

Obviously much more went on outside the conference room than in it, and the principal reason why nothing much could be done officially was that the Rumanians were obstructing the main measures which the Russians had intended to press upon their colleagues.

The Russians want more Warsaw Pact manoeuvres to take place in the countries of Eastern Europe; and in particular they want to be free to transport Russian troops into and out of Rumania. There is little evidence at this juncture that they actually want to conquer Rumania as they did Czechoslovakia seven months ago. They are at the moment in the business of creating precedents, which may be useful hereafter.

But the Rumanians will not play: either at manoeuvres or at the game of condemning China for the Ussuri incidents which the Russians also want all their Eastern European friends to play. The Rumanians probably quite honestly think of themselves as honest brokers—they think that one day they will be able to reap the glory of bringing peace between the two Communist giants. The Russians find this simply impertinent.

The only thing that actually did emerge from the two hours of real conference was a proposal for an all-European security conference—something that has been made before and rejected in the West because it was thought to be hypocritical. How can you talk about regional security conferences when you are manoeuvring troops in threatening fashion and when you have quite recently indulged in a sinister military exercise which was in truth no manoeuvre?

There is very reason to suppose that the Russians were simply trying to save their faces when they had this red herring put into the conference communique, for they are by no means unaware how much contempt is felt in the West for their savage action last August in suppressing freedom in Czechoslovakia.

—*Swiss Press Review and News Report*

Trade Unions & Politics

By

V. B. KARNIK

Price: Rs 3.50

Published by

UNIVERSITY OF BOMBAY

Labour Education Service

127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay 1.

Review

Fire Bell in the Night

G. Gerasimov, G. Kuznetsov, V. Morev, Novosti Press Agency, Moscow.

This is one amongst several pamphlets recently put out by the Novosti Press Agency. It is well printed, has several illustrations and is not priced. It is obviously meant for free circulation.

The pamphlet is about the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King. Incidentally, it also deals with many other atrocities committed against Negro leaders involved in the fight for civil rights and racial equality.

To suit the needs of anti-American propaganda, only one side, the dark side, of the picture is portrayed. However revolting that side may be, no objective observer can disregard the other side, the progress made in the course of the last couple of decades in uplifting the standards of the Negroes and in securing integration. But the Novosti Press Agency is interested only in propaganda, propaganda that will help the Russian cause.

That determines the character of this pamphlet and of others that are issued from time to time. One wonders if these pamphlets are allowed to reach ordinary Russian readers. However blatant the propaganda, the pamphlets may have an upsetting effect upon the Russian people, for sometimes they talk of freedom and of peoples' struggles for preserving it. Or, are they meant only for foreign consumption?

N. D.

Czechoslovakia 1968

National Academy, Delhi 6, Re. 1

This is an Indian edition of articles which appeared in the *Economist*, London in 1968 on the development in Czechoslovakia. It is, as stated on the blurb, a "blow-by-blow account of the events of 1968" published to enable interested people "to know and understand how it all happened".

What happened in Czechoslovakia early in 1968 was a democratic revolution. It was peaceful and constitutional because it was spearheaded by the ruling Communist Party. But it was not to the liking of Russia and other communist neighbours as the ruling group of those countries felt their own position threatened. As one article has put it: "If the Czech experiment really got under way, Russia's ruling bureaucracy might be swept away by the wind of freedom blowing from Prague." That is why Russia, Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria and Hungary marched

their armies into Czechoslovakia and tried to suppress it by physical force.

This certainly was a world-shaking event which deserves to be studied and understood in depth. Immediately after the invasion a competent and well-known journalist, Mr. D. B. Karnik put together in his book *The Czechoslovak Crisis* a day-by-day story of the invasion along with some information about its background. The *Economist* pamphlet, discussing as it does the political implications of the developments, will prove a useful supplement to that book.

N. D.

Books Received

The following books have been received for review.

Reviews of some of them will appear in subsequent issues.

1. *Economic Democracy*, B. A. Tarlton, published by the Forum of Free Enterprise, Bombay.
2. *The Union Budget 1969-1970*, N. A. Palkhivala, published by the Forum of Free Enterprise, Bombay.
3. *India and Regional Economic Cooperation*, published by the Forum of Free Enterprise, Bombay.
4. *The Commonwealth in South Asia*, S. P. Aiyar, published by Lalvani Publishing House. Price: Rs. 30/-.
5. *The Strategy of Food and Agriculture in India*, Edited by V. R. Mutalik Desai, published by Lalvani Publishing House. Price: Rs. 22/50.
6. *Problems of Monetary Policy in Underdeveloped Countries*, P. D. Hajela, published by Lalvani Publishing House. Price: Rs. 25/-.

The Czechoslovak Crisis

EVENTS AND STATEMENTS

Edited by

D. B. KARNIK

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Ward 18, Bombay 18

Without Comment

Parliamentary Democracy

In the course of an article Mr. P. Kodanda Rao writes:

THE party system, particularly the two-party system, has been asserted as an axiomatic desideratum of parliamentary democracy. But Maurice Duverger said in his classic, *Political Parties*, that parliamentary representatives are compelled to an obedience which transformed them into a voting machine controlled by the leaders of the party and therefore "parties become totalitarian."

Sir Winston Churchill said on March 26, 1955, that the first duty of a member of parliament was to his own conscience, the second to his constituency, of which he was a representative but not a delegate, and the third to his political party.

An essential of democracy is the freedom of speech and vote to the elected representative. Under the party system, he has that freedom in meetings of his party whose proceedings are private and whose decisions are not binding on the people, but if he be in a minority in the party on any question, he is denied freedom of speech and vote in the duly constituted legislature whose proceedings are public and whose decisions affect the people and has to vote with the majority of his party.

In parliamentary democracy, the Government is responsible, not to the legislature, but to its party, for it can hold office only as long as its party continues to retain its majority in the legislature and must demit office the moment it loses it. In order to retain its majority, it has often to adopt all kinds of methods, not always honourable, at the expense of the taxpayers. It has to compel all its members to vote in its support and suppress freedom of speech and vote to its dissenting minority. Decisions are taken in party meetings and given legal publicity in the legislature. Hence, the Parliamentary system is both undemocratic and anti-democratic.

Under the Presidential system, there is security of tenure to the executive and the legislature for the constitutional term, and, in consequence, party discipline is not rigidly enforced in the legislature, and members have considerable freedom of speech and vote on the merits of each question. The Presidential system is thus less anti-democratic.

Under democratic freedom of thought, members, who form a party, do not think alike on every question. Differences within each party are often wider than between parties.

Democracy demands: All for the people and none

for a Party; but the Party system demands: Each for his Party and none for the Nation. Nation demands: All for the Nation; None for a Party.

Growing Social Injustice

(Extracts from an article by Prof. B. R. Shenoy)

UNEMPLOYMENT at the close (1955-56) of the First Plan was 5.3 million. It rose to about 7 million at the close (1960-61) of the Second Plan. The Third Plan (1961-62 to 1965-66) added to this figure 2.5 million unemployed. Unemployment in 1966-67 rose, as a result, to about 10 million. Currently, unemployment is believed to be increasing faster than in the recent past. Apparently, the expansion of employment fell short of the growth of population during this period.

Income shifts and unemployment have added to social injustice. The shifted incomes accrue to a thin top layer of society. The incomes shifted may well amount to a substantial part of the annual increases in national income; the balance left would be, therefore, less than sufficient to maintain the growing numbers of the masses at the pre-existing level of living. In a background of overall income stagnation since 1960-61 or, as during past three years, of a decline in per capita income, income shifts on so large a scale must involve considerable hardship. Tens of thousands of already indigent families are being pushed, each year, towards or below the bread line.

The consequent widening of income contrasts is visible to the naked eye. Witness the flaunting of income and wealth by the few at weddings and other ceremonies; the enormous increase in the ownership of status symbols; the overcrowding of holiday resorts, expensive hotels, restaurants, theatres and "culture" shows; the capacity loads of air-conditioned coaches and jet planes; and the luxury flats and structures, more especially in New Delhi and the larger seaports and urban centres.

Consumption statistics confirm the growing social injustice. The living standards of the Indian masses are so low that consumption of the necessities of life provides a dependable index of their economic condition. The consumption of cotton cloth fell from 14.8 metres in 1961-62 to 13.8 metres in 1966-67; of food-grains from 170.3 kgs. to 146.6 kgs; of edible oils from 4.2 kgs. to 3.4 kgs; and of sugar from 5.7 kgs. to 5.1 kgs. In 1965-66, taking 1954-55 as the base year (when the new policy measures gathered momentum), the registration of motorcars rose 2.2 times; the consumption of cotton fabrics 2.8 times, of refrigerators 3.7 times; and of air-conditioners 2.1 times. These latter commodities enter into the consumption of the upper-income groups and are beyond the reach of the masses.



Democracy is a Government of the people, by the people, for the people. True. But it can find fulfilment only if citizens have a right to own property, to produce and consume goods and services desired by them within reasonable regulations by the State. Democracy can find fulfilment only

if the initiative and enterprise of the people, whether in agriculture, business, industry or the professions, are allowed to flourish. A democracy can work only if you, an intelligent citizen, understand the economic issues and help to formulate public opinion

Join the Forum of Free Enterprise, a non-political organisation, to educate public opinion on free enterprise and to stimulate public thinking on economic issues. You will find booklets and leaflets, issued by it every month, helpful in understanding current economic problems.

Write for particulars (state whether Membership or Student Associateship):

FORUM OF FREE ENTERPRISE

Sohrab House, Dr. D. N. Road, Post Box 48-A, Bombay-1, (BR).

With Many Voices

"The deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."
—Tennyson.

The Americans are bastards, but honest bastards.
The Russians are liars and traitors.

—Chen Yi quoted in *The Economist*, March 8.

If East Pakistan goes Communist, declared itself
independent, Red China could end up with a satellite
south of the Himalayas.

—U.S. *New & World Report*, March 31.

It was the genius of India to fragment and it was
no use opposing the vivisection of States.

—Acharya J. B. Kripalani, *Times of India*, April 2.

The Mao tse-Tung group regards the countries of
the socialist community as the main obstacle to the
achievement of its hegemonistic aims in the inter-
national arena.

—*Communist*, through Tass.

In dictatorial regimes the beginning may seem easy.
Yet tragedy waits at the end, inescapably.

—Greek poet and diplomat, Georgos S. Seperiades,
Time, April 4.

No longer can the Congress boast that it is indispens-
able for running the country.

—Sputnik, *Economic Times*, April 7.

Anything that the British call a problem is peanuts
compared with what Calcutta knows.

—Geoffrey Moorhouse, *Guardian Weekly*, April 10.

I have witnessed a firm determination of the people
to rise against the Centre whenever any occasion will
demand.

—Jatin Chakrabarty, Minister for Parliamentary
Affairs, West Bengal, *Economic Times*, April 11.

How long can this sort of political buffoonery and
infantilism, fraught as they are with the gravest con-
sequences not only to West Bengal but to India as a
whole, be allowed to go on?

—*The Indian Express*, April 11.

The dividing line is Statism as against freedom.

—C. Rajagopalachari, *Swarajya*, April 12.

The C.P.I. will jump on Mrs. Gandhi's bandwagon.

—G. S. Bhargava, *The Citizen*, April 12.

Mussolini and Hitler; Stalin and Mao; Nkrumah and
Sukarno; Batista, Trujillo, Duvalier, Peron, Castro.
When before in human history could a man of forty
say that he had lived contemporarily with such a
galaxy of tyrants?

—*The Economist*, April 12.

The essence of democracy does not consist in con-
ceding every demand that the people raise from time
to time.

—*Janata*, April 13.

It is not the want of power at the Centre, but the
failure to exercise firmly and in time such power as
it has, that led to many difficult situations.

—M. C. Setalvad, former Attorney-General,
Times of India, April 13.

Getting new lavatory seats fitted in your factory can
be more revolutionary than waving red flags outside the
factory gates.

—Hans Loeffler, *Statesman*, April 15.

When the flame of discontent is lit, the people will
stop at nothing.

—Maulana Bhashani, *Time*, April 15.

To the Editor,
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C/o Democratic Research Service,
127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
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